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# A summer at the CIA

By Gerald Turner

AMERICANS have many perceptions of the Central Intelligence Agency. Some view it as an organization whose ultimate objective is to protect the security of the United States against foreign invaders. Others view it as an espionage organization which gains secrets from foreign countries. Many believe that the personnel who work for the CIA are mainly secret agents; this is not necessarily true. The CIA, in fact, offers a broad spectrum of career opportunities.

For example, I have recently participated in a CIA 1982 summer fellowship program and can report on these diverse opportunities based on my summer tour.

The agency, for the past three summers (1980, 1981, and 1982), has successfully sponsored a fellowship program which places professors of predominantly black colleges in the CIA during the summer months.

The basic objective of the summer program is to improve the expertise of the participants, thereby enabling them to better prepare students for the challenges of corporate and government worlds. Another objective is to assist the agency to recruit the best qualified applicants to fill its professional needs.

I had the opportunity to work in the Office of Data Processing (ODP). The data processing field is at the leading edge of our technological society. My manager provided me with excellent leadership, exposure, ODP training classes, and a variety of ODP projects.

He was concerned with promoting the team concept among all ODP employees. I worked on advanced computer application projects and participated in a number of ODP meetings. It was an enjoyable summer experience. The people in the office were very easy to work with and provided their technical expertise whenever the need arose.

I perceived the ODP to be a highly intelligent group who were constantly updating their training to the current computer trends. One could not find a company or governmental agency capable of providing a set of computer tools finer than those available in the CIA.

ODP provided excellent training facilities for those learning the latest state-of-the-art. Whether one desired a career as an applications programmer, systems analyst, or computer specialist, there are many opportunities available in the area of ODP.

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